CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1.   A wireless remote terminal apparatus comprising:

a label reader capable of reading information from a label;

a communication unit capable of communicating information to one or more service nodes; and

a controller, coupled the label reader, the communication unit, arranged to (1) receive information from the label reader, (2) send a request to one or more of the service nodes through the communication unit, (3) receive an information response from the service node, and (4) display the information response,

wherein the request and the response are formatted as documents capable of being exchanged in a distributed, decentralized environment.

2.   The apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the information response includes competitive product information of a product associated with the label.

3.   The apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein, responsive to the received information response, the controller

is further arranged to allow profile information to be accessed by a service node to engage into a commercial transaction

4. The apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the apparatus and the service node communicate in a client/server network.

5. The apparatus according to Claim 4, wherein the documents comprise XML documents.

6. The apparatus according to Claim 5, wherein the XML documents are expressed as SOAP messages.

7. The apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising a context sensor coupled to the controller.

8. The apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the one or more service nodes are responsive to a profile associated with a user contained within the request from the apparatus.

9. The apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the controller further is operable to allow a user to complete an on-line commercial transaction in response to the received information.

10. The apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the controller further is operable to allow a user to adjust the read information from a label and re-sending a request to one or more of the service nodes.

11. The apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the label reader comprises an RFID reader or a barcode reader.

12. An wireless remote terminal apparatus comprising:

a memory; and

a processor coupled to the memory and operative to read information from a tag, communicate the information to an service node, receive a response from the service node, and responsive to the received response, to allow profile information to be accessed by a service node to engage into a commercial transaction, and where the request and the response are formatted as documents capable of being exchanged in a distributed, decentralized environment.

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13. The apparatus according to Claim 12, wherein the tag comprises an RFID or barcode tag.

14. A method for allowing a remote user to receive assistance in determining whether to complete an on-site or an on-line commercial transaction, the method comprising the steps of:

reading information from a label of a product, the product located at a retailer location, using a remote terminal;

communicating the information to one or more service nodes using the remote terminal;

performing an information search relating to the product, at the service node using the information; and

transmitting an information response to the wireless remote terminal.

15. The method according to claim 14, further including determining whether to complete an on-site commercial transaction at the retailer location using the information response.

16. The method according to claim 14, further including determining whether to complete an on-line commercial

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transaction at the retailer location using the information response and remote terminal.

17.   The method according to claim 14, wherein the one or more service nodes are responsive to a profile associated with a user contained within the information from the remote terminal.

18.   The method according to claim 14, further including the step of adjusting the read information from the label to conduct a new search.